Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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Note: The data cut-off for this product was 11am ET on April 19. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 20 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky proposed extending Russian President Vladimir Putin's 30-hour unilateral truce on Russian military operations in Ukraine to a complete and unconditional 30-day ceasefire. Putin ordered Russian Chief of the General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov to officially halt all Russian military actions in Ukraine on April 19, effective from 1800 Moscow time on April 19 until 0000 Moscow time on April 21.[1] Putin stated that Russia will "assume that the Ukrainian side will follow [Russia's] example" while ordering Russian forces to "be ready to repel possible violations of the truce" by Ukrainian forces. Zelensky responded to Putin's order later on April 19 and proposed that Russia and Ukraine extend Putin's 30-hour truce to a "complete and unconditional" 30-day ceasefire if Russian forces actually cease all military operations.[2] Zelensky stated that Ukraine will "mirror" Russia's response and accused Russia of imposing the 30-hour truce for "headlines" rather than demonstrating genuine confidence-building measures. Zelensky reported that, according to Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief General Oleksandr Syrskyi, Russian forces continue assault operations and shelling in several unspecified areas of the frontline. This truce is unlikely to hold given that Russian forces appear to have continued limited offensive operations and indiscriminate shelling across the frontline in the first few hours of the truce and given Russia's continued rejection of a full ceasefire. The United States and Ukraine jointly proposed implementing an immediate 30-day full ceasefire to Russia on March 13, but Putin and other Russian officials have repeatedly rejected the proposal since then.[3]

Putin stated that the temporary truce will demonstrate whether Ukraine is willing to comply with agreements and participate in peace negotiations "aimed at eliminating the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis."[4] Russian officials regularly invoke the "root causes" phrase to allude to Russia's unyielding demands for NATO to abandon its open-door policy and for regime change in Ukraine.[5] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces will observe the Easter truce provided that Ukrainian forces reciprocate.[6] It is unlikely that Russian officials and military commanders effectively communicated plans to implement the temporary truce to frontline units or Ukrainian officials prior to Putin's announcement. Russia's prior well-evidenced behavior regarding the temporary moratorium on long-range strikes against energy infrastructure indicates that Russian officials likely intend to continue making unsubstantiated allegations of Ukrainian truce violations.[7] Russia, in this sense, is likely leveraging its unilateral implementation of a temporary truce in Ukraine to introduce informational conditions that will act as a pretext to support Russia's

continued efforts to undermine and discredit Ukraine. Russia may exploit unsubstantiated claims of Ukrainian truce violations to undermine support for the proposed peace framework that the United States presented in Paris, France, on April 17. Russia is also likely attempting to curry favor with the United States and portray itself as an agreeable negotiating partner in direct response to US President Donald Trump's recent remarks that the United States will reconsider its role in brokering peace in Ukraine, depending on how the peace process develops in the coming days.[8]

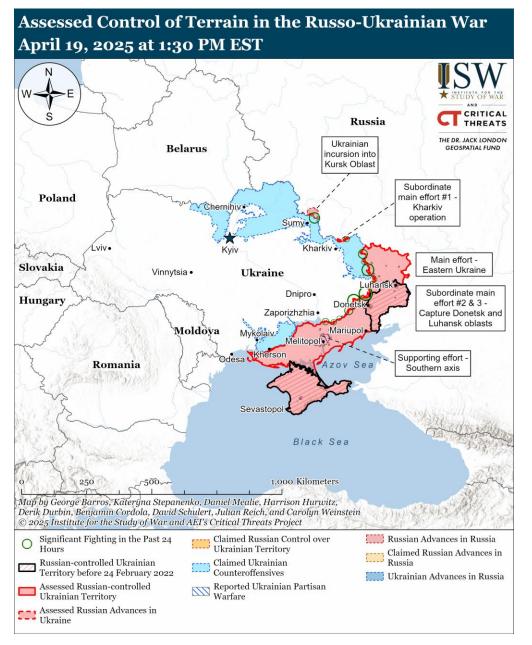
US officials are reportedly growing frustrated with the Kremlin's rejections of US proposals to end the war in Ukraine. The New York Times (NYT), citing European officials who were familiar with the US discussions in Paris on April 17, reported on April 18 that the US stance on a ceasefire remains largely the same but that Russian officials have "dragged their feet" and insisted on additional conditions for US President Donald Trump's proposed unconditional general ceasefire, including the "denazification" of Ukraine.[9] Russian President Vladimir Putin named "denazification" as one of his main goals in launching his full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and Russian officials have previously defined "denazification" as the "liquidation of those who instill" Russophobia in other people.[10] Putin and other Kremlin officials have since reiterated this demand for "denazification" to call for regime change in Ukraine and the installation of a pro-Russian proxy government.[11] Axios reported on April 18 that two European diplomats stated that US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told UK, German, and French diplomats that President Trump is "losing his patience" and may withdraw from the peace process if a peace deal is not concluded "soon."[12] Trump stated on April 18 that he hopes to conclude a peace deal in Ukraine "quickly" and that if either Ukraine or Russia "makes it very difficult," then "we're just going to take a pass."[13] CNN reported on April 18 that a source familiar with the Trump administration stated that the Trump administration is attempting to plan another meeting between US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff and Russian authorities to discuss the proposed framework.[14]

Ukraine and Russia conducted the largest prisoner of war (POW) exchange on April 19 since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky reported on April 19 that Ukrainian authorities returned 277 Ukrainian POWs, comprised of members of the Ukrainian forces, National Guard, State Transport Service, and Border Guard, from Russian captivity.[15] Zelensky thanked the United Arab Emirates for mediating the POW exchange with Russia and noted that Ukrainian authorities have returned a total of 4,552 Ukrainian civilians and soldiers from Russian captivity since the start of the war in February 2022. The Russian MoD claimed on April 19 that Russia and Ukraine conducted a 246-to -246 POW exchange and that Russia transferred an additional 31 wounded Ukrainian POWs to Ukraine in exchange for 15 wounded Russian POWs.[16]

Key Takeaways:

- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky proposed extending Russian President Vladimir Putin's 30-hour unilateral truce on Russian military operations in Ukraine to a complete and unconditional 30-day ceasefire.
- US officials are reportedly growing frustrated with the Kremlin's rejections of US proposals to end the war in Ukraine.

- Ukraine and Russia conducted the largest prisoner of war (POW) exchange on April 19 since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.
- Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Pokrovsk, and Russian forces recently advanced near Toretsk and Pokrovsk.



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are wellcovered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian

violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

- Alleged Ceasefire Violation
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Supporting Effort Northern Axis
- Russian Main Effort Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Alleged Ceasefire Violations

Ukrainian officials have agreed to "mirror" Russia's implementation of a general ceasefire following the expiration of the temporary ceasefire on energy infrastructure strikes. Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov announced the end of the temporary ceasefire on energy infrastructure strikes on April 18, and Ukraine and Russia have not concluded agreements for a maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea or general ceasefire in Ukraine.[17] Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a unilateral Easter truce from 1800 Moscow time on April 19 to 0000 Moscow time on April 21.[18] Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky agreed to "mirror" Russia's implementation of the Easter truce and proposed expanding this truce to a 30-day full ceasefire, as US authorities first proposed on March 18, a proposal to which Russian authorities have not yet responded and have repeatedly rejected.[19]

The Russian MoD continued to claim without evidence on April 19 that Ukrainian strikes damaged energy infrastructure in Russia and occupied Ukraine over the past day, but it is unclear why, given that the Kremlin announced the end of the energy infrastructure strikes ceasefire on April 18.[20]

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Russian forces continued efforts to push Ukrainian forces from limited positions in Kursk Oblast on April 19 but did not make confirmed advances. Unconfirmed claims: The Russian MoD and some Russian milbloggers claimed on April 19 that Russian forces seized Oleshnya (west of Sudzha), although another Russian milblogger denied this claim.[21] Russian Chief of the General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov told Russian President Vladimir Putin on April 19 that elements of the Russian 51st and 137th airborne (VDV) regiments (both of the 106th VDV Division) seized Oleshnya and are clearing the Gornal Monastery (possibly referring to the St. Nicholas Monastery northeast of Gornal [south of Sudzha]).[22]

Russian forces continued assaults near Oleshnya and Gornal on April 18 and 19.[23]

Order of Battle: Gerasimov claimed that elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet [BSF]) are operating in Gornal.[24] Elements of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) are reportedly operating in Kursk Oblast.[25] Elements of the "Pitersky" Battalion of Chechen Akhmat Spetsnaz are reportedly fighting in the Kursk Oblast border area.[26]

Fighting continued near Demidovka and Popovka (both northwest of Belgorod City) on April 18 and 19 but Russian forces did not advance.[27]

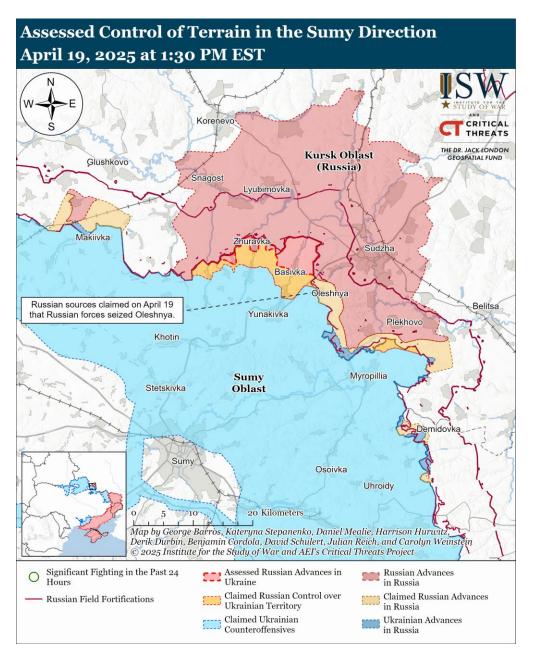
A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Demidovka and Popovka.[28]

Gerasimov claimed that Russian forces have pushed Ukrainian forces from Demidovka and are destroying small groups of Ukrainian forces in the forests south of Popovka.[29]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating in Demidovka.[30]

<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border and approach to within tube artillery range of Sumy City)

Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported ground activity in Sumy Oblast on April 19.



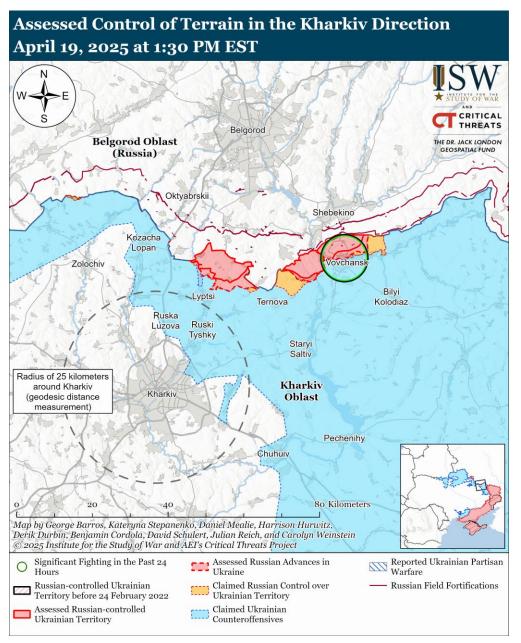
<u> Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine</u>

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (</u>Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued assaults in the Kharkiv direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued assaults northwest of Kharkiv City in the direction of Zolochiv, north of Kharkiv City near Lyptsi, and northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on April 18 and 19.[31] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Vovchansk.[32]

An officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kharkiv direction stated on April 19 that Russian forces have not used armored vehicles in this direction in a long time.[33]



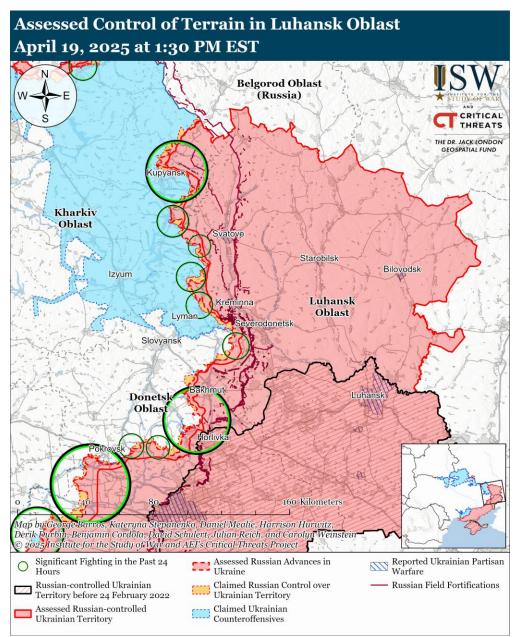
<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on April 19 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Zapadne (north of Kupyansk) and entered southeastern Mala Shapkivka (southeast of Zapadne).[34] A milblogger claimed that central Mala Shapkivka is a contested "gray zone."[35]

Russian forces continued ground assaults northeast of Kupyansk near Kamyanka, north of Kupyansk near Kindrashivka, east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka, and southeast of Kupyansk near Pishchane and Stepova Novoselivka on April 18 and 19.[36]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 27th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Zapadne, and elements of the 352nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (11th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) reportedly continue operating in the Kupyansk direction.[37]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Nova Kruhlyakivka, east of Borova near Nadiya, and southeast of Borova toward Hrekivka and Olhivka on April 18 and 19.[38]

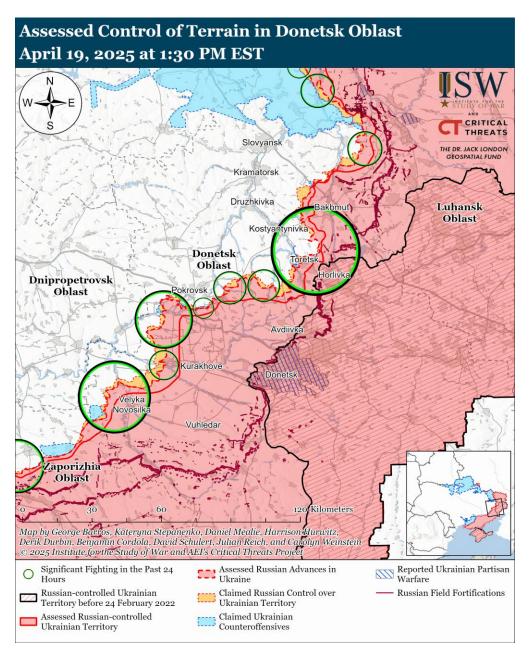
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked north of Lyman near Novomykhailivka, Nove, Zelena Dolyna, and Hlushchenkove; northeast of Lyman near Kolodyazi and Yampolivka; and east of Lyman near Torske on April 18 and 19.[39]

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted ground attacks east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyanske and southeast of Siversk near Spirne on April 18 and 19.[40]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted ground attacks near Chasiv Yar itself; southeast of Chasiv Yar west of Andriivka; south of Chasiv Yar toward Bila Hora and Stupochky; and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Ozaryanivka on April 18 and 19.[41]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 16 and 18 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced west of Toretsk and east of Dachne (northeast of Toretsk), respectively.[42]

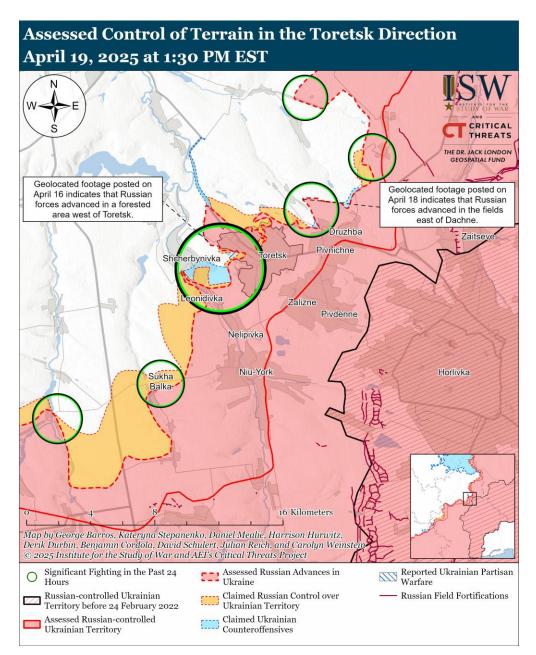
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced from Niu York (south of Toretsk) toward Sukha Balka (southwest of Toretsk).[43]

Russian forces conducted ground attacks near Toretsk itself; northeast of Toretsk near Dachne and Dyliivka; east of Toretsk near Druzhba and Krymske; southwest of Toretsk near Sukha Balka, Oleksandropil, and Valentynivka; and west of Toretsk near Leonidivka on April 18 and 19.[44]

A Ukrainian source reportedly affiliated with Ukrainian military intelligence stated on April 18 that Russian forces redeployed unspecified drone units from the Kursk direction to the area southwest of Toretsk near Kalynove and that these units are now operating in the Kostyantynivka direction.[45] This is the first time that ISW has observed reports of Russian redeployments from Kursk Oblast, and this report is consistent with ISW's assessment that Russian forces may prioritize offensive operations in the Kostyantynivka direction in Spring and Summer 2025.[46]

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets reported on April 19 that Russian forces recently changed tactics in the Toretsk direction and are increasingly conducting motorized assaults on motorcycles.[47] Zaporozhets stated that Russian forces are attacking in groups of three to five motorcycles and that Russian forces use soldiers on motorcycles for different functions, including to conduct assaults, to clear mines, and to tow infantry. Zaporozhets stated that Russian forces are attempting to use these motorcycle forces to rapidly advance through fields and consolidate positions without additional reinforcements.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Sukha Balka.[48]



Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 19 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in southwestern Lysivka (southeast of Pokrovsk).[49]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 19 indicates that Russian forces seized Novotoretske and advanced in central Myrolyubivka (both east of Pokrovsk) during a reinforced company-sized mechanized assault on April 17.[50] Additional geolocated footage published on April 19 indicates that Russian forces advanced along the T-0406 Pokrovsk-Mezhova highway northeast of Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[51]

Unconfirmed claims: The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces seized Shevchenko, which several Russian milbloggers claimed is referring to the outdated name for the eastern part of Kalynove (east of

Pokrovsk) as opposed to the settlement of Shevchenko south of Pokrovsk.[52] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced to the outskirts of Leontovychi (formerly Pershe Travyna, just southwest of Pokrovsk).[53]

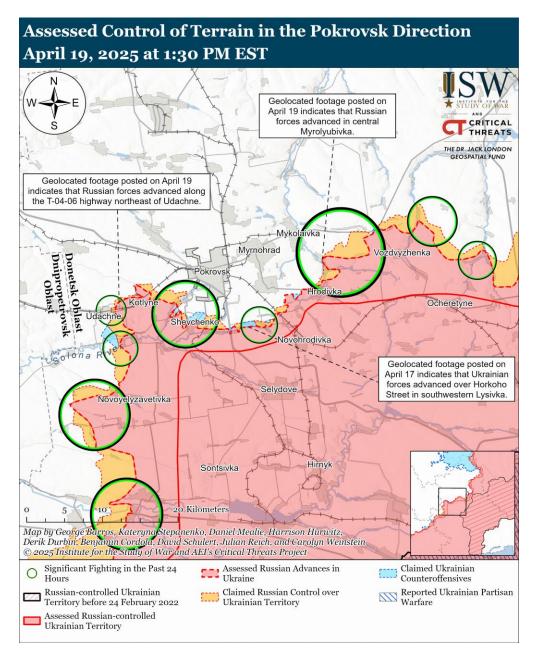
Russian forces attacked Pokrovsk near Tarasivka; east of Pokrovsk near Svyrydonivka, Yelyzavetivka, Stara Mykolaivka, Myrolyubivka, Vodyane Druhe, Novotoretske, Malynivka, Myrne, Promin, and Stara Mykolaivka; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Shevchenko and Pishchane; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Zvirove, Kotlyne, Novooleksandrivka, and Udachne on April 18 and 19.[54] Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in Udachne, Kotlyne, and Pishchane.[55]

A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported on April 19 that Ukrainian forces destroyed 24 armored fighting vehicles, 99 motorcycles, and two other vehicles and killed 229 and wounded 34 Russian personnel during the Russian reinforced company-sized mechanized assault near Pokrovsk on April 17.[56]

The commander of a Ukrainian artillery battalion operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated that Russian forces are deploying well-trained contract soldiers and mobilized personnel without adequate training in the area.[57]

Another Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported on April 19 that it destroyed a Russian locomotive transporting equipment between Russia and occupied Ukraine in the Pokrovsk direction with a drone.[58]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 120th Artillery Brigade (41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) are reportedly operating near Lysivka.[59]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued assaults northeast of Novopavlivka near Solone and Uspenivka, east of Novopavlivka near Kotlyarivka and Preobrazhenka, and southeast of Novopavlivka near Bohdanivka on April 18 and 19.[60] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked near Solone.[61]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 6th and 80th tank regiments (both of the 90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, CMD) are reportedly operating near Kotlyarivka.[62]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on April 19butdidnotadvance.

Russian forces continued assaults west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil and Andriivka on April 18 and 19.[63] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Bahatyr (west of Kurakhove).[64]

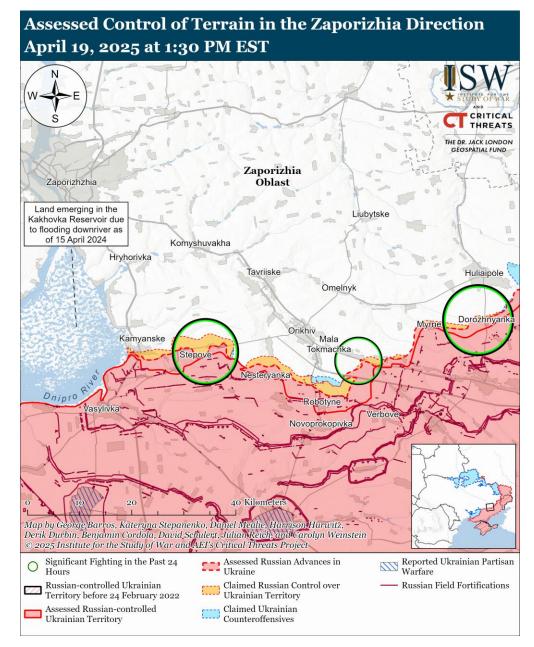
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velkya Novosilka direction on April 19 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued ground assaults northeast of Velyka Novosilka in the direction of Odradne, north of Velyka Novosilka near Vesele and Dniproenerhiya, northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne and Vilne Pole, and west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka.[65]

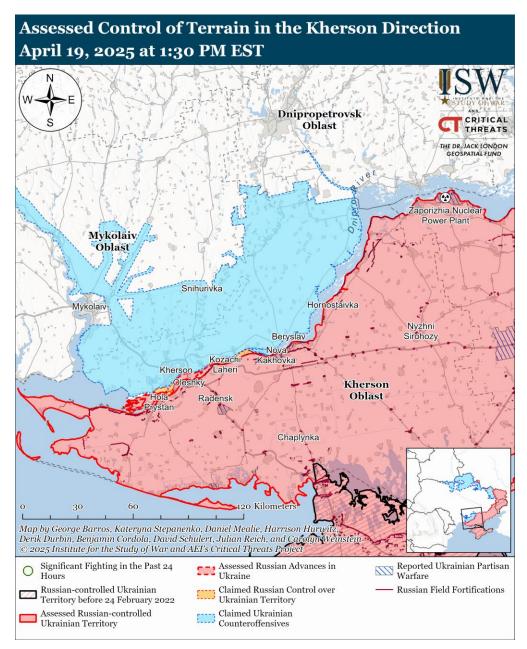
<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on April 19butdidnotadvance.Russian forces continued ground assaults southwest of Orikhiv near Stepove, Mali Shcherbaky,
Novoandriivka, and Shcherbaky; and southeast of Orikhiv near Mala Tokmachka on April 18 and
19.[66]

Order of Battle: Elements of the 247th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Stepove, and elements of the 108th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Mali Shcherbaky.[67]



Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported ground activity in the Dnipro direction on April 19.



The "Atesh" Crimea-based Ukrainian partisan group reported on April 19 that almost all families of senior Russian Black Sea Fleet (BSF) military officers left occupied Sevastopol.[68] Atesh reported that Russian forces received a new directive in early April 2025 to implement additional security measures, including increased patrols of BARS (Russian Army Combat Reserve) personnel and cancelling leave for military personnel stationed in occupied Crimea.

<u>Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign</u> (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)

Russian forces conducted a series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine overnight on April 18 and 19. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched three Iskander-M ballistic missiles and two Onyx anti-ship cruise missiles from occupied Crimea, and three Kh-31P anti-radar

missiles from an unspecified location.[69] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces also launched 87 Shahed and decoy drones from Kursk City; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and occupied Hvardiiske, Crimea. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 33 Shahed drones over Ukraine and that 36 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian strikes damaged civilian infrastructure in Kharkiv, Odesa, Sumy, Donetsk, and Zaporizhia oblasts.[70]

<u>Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts</u> (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

ISW is suspending Russian technological adaptations coverage in its daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessments. ISW is introducing a new product line tracking Russian mobilization, force generation efforts, and technological adaptations. Click here to read the Russian Force Generation and Adaptations Update.

<u>Russian Technological Adaptations</u> (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)

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<u>Significant activity in Belarus</u> (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks)

Nothing significant to report.

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.

BABELSTREET

POWERED BY:

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